



2024-2025 Stronger Connections Grant

Competitive Grant Application: Due 11:59 p.m. CT, July 18, 2023

NOGA ID

Application stamp-in date and time

TEA will only accept grant application documents by **email**, including competitive grant applications and amendments. Submit grant applications and amendments as follows:

Competitive grant applications and amendments to competitivegrants@tea.texas.gov.

The application **MUST** bear the signature of a person authorized to bind the applicant to a contractual agreement

Authorizing legislation:

Grant period: **Pre-award costs:**

Required attachments:

Amendment Number

Amendment number (For amendments only; enter N/A when completing this form to apply for grant funds):

1. Applicant Information

Name of organization

Campus name CDN Vendor ID ESC UEI

Address City ZIP Phone

Primary Contact Email Phone

Secondary Contact Email Phone

2. Certification and Incorporation

I understand that this application constitutes an offer and, if accepted by TEA or renegotiated to acceptance, will form a binding agreement. I hereby certify that the information contained in this application is, to the best of my knowledge, correct and that the organization named above has authorized me as its representative to obligate this organization in a legally binding contractual agreement. I certify that any ensuing program and activity will be conducted in accordance and compliance with all applicable federal and state laws and regulations.

I further certify my acceptance of the requirements conveyed in the following portions of the grant application, as applicable, and that these documents are incorporated by reference as part of the grant application and Notice of Grant Award (NOGA):

- Grant application, guidelines, and instructions
- General Provisions and Assurances
- Application-Specific Provisions and Assurances
- Debarment and Suspension Certification
- Lobbying Certification
- ESSA Provisions and Assurances requirements

Authorized Official Name Title Email

Phone Signature Date

Grant Writer Name Signature Date

Grant writer is an employee of the applicant organization. Grant writer is **not** an employee of the applicant organization.

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Adjustments on this page have been confirmed with _____ by _____ of TEA by phone / fax / email on _____.

3. Shared Services Arrangements

Shared services arrangements (SSAs) are not permitted for this grant.

4. Identify/Address Needs

List up to three quantifiable needs, as identified in your needs assessment, that these program funds will address. Describe your plan for addressing each need.

Quantifiable Need	Plan for Addressing Need
Social Emotional Learning	Using school-wide practices that allow students to experience a sense of belonging which will address many areas of bullying, being respectful to others, communication to get needs met, kindness, and students learning about their emotions and how to interact socially
Low Socioeconomic At Risk	Students are surrounded by adults they can trust and are committed to building strong, healthy, positive relationships.
Trauma-informed school	Establishing learning environments that provide emotional and physical safety to help students overcome challenging traumatic experiences. Implementation of a Behavioral Threat Assessment.

5. SMART Goal

Describe the summative SMART goal you have identified for this program (a goal that is Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Timely), either related to student outcome or consistent with the purpose of the grant.

Our SMART goal may be adjusted if needs change and depending on the criteria established by the parent, student, and staff advisory committee or the ongoing behavioral threat assessment results as we incorporate practices aligned to the Student Support Program. By June 2025, incidences of student discipline behavior referrals will decrease by 10%, students receiving non academic support will increase by 10% with the utilization of the Student Support Program; 10% of students will report feeling safer and supported in SEL areas of need. Specific - behavior related incidences, social emotional wellness; Measurable - quantify discipline, referrals, restorative practice data; Achievable- increase trained personnel- plan yr. 2023-2024, imp yr. 2024-2025; Relevant- correlates to existing low socio %, incidences of referrals; Timely- assessing needs based on data quarterly

6. Measurable Progress

Identify the benchmarks that you will use at the end of the first three grant quarters to measure progress toward meeting the process and implementation goals defined for the grant.

First-Quarter Benchmark

By the end of the 1st quarter, incidences of student discipline behavior referrals will decrease by 3%; students receiving non academic support will increase by 3%; student surveys show 5% of students feel safer and supported in SEL areas of need.

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6. Measurable Progress (Cont.)**Second-Quarter Benchmark**

By the end of the 1st quarter, incidences of student discipline behavior referrals will decrease by 6%; students receiving non academic support will increase by 6%; student surveys show 9% students feel safer and supported in SEL areas of need.

Third-Quarter Benchmark

By the end of the 1st quarter, incidences of student discipline behavior referrals will decrease by 8%; students receiving non academic support will increase by 8%; student surveys show 12% students feel safer and supported in SEL areas of need.

7. Project Evaluation and Modification

Describe how you will use project evaluation data to determine when and how to modify your program. If your benchmarks or summative SMART goals do not show progress, describe how you will use evaluation data to modify your program for sustainability.

We will use our existing data dashboard to support the implementation of the data collection and reporting system developed by the Texas Center for Student Supports to gather and analyze data to monitor efficacy of the implementation of our Student Support Program. This will include the student support team structure, quality of support leading to positive outcomes, and data related to increases in desired outcomes. We will use all data such as academic, attendance, and nonacademic; quantity and type of behavior and discipline referrals, increased student support team referrals for non academic needs correlated to an increase in effective supports received by students; a reduction in disciplinary incidents; reduction in bullying; increase in referrals for mental health services, or a reduction in classroom disruptions, interruptions, or removals from class, etc. The incorporation of systems like incorporating a case management system in the student support team aligned to the training and support provided by the Texas Center for Student Supports. Establishing and implementing the various systems and structures of the Texas Center for Student Supports will strengthen and support the practices we have in place allowing for sustainability of the Student Support Program.

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8. Statutory/Program Assurances

The following assurances apply to this grant program. In order to meet the requirements of the grant, the grantee must comply with these assurances.

Check each of the following boxes to indicate your compliance.

1. The applicant provides assurance that program funds will supplement (increase the level of service), and not supplant (replace) state mandates, State Board of Education rules, and activities previously conducted with state or local funds. The applicant provides assurance that state or local funds may not be decreased or diverted for other purposes merely because of the availability of these funds. The applicant provides assurance that program services and activities to be funded from this grant will be supplementary to existing services and activities and will not be used for any services or activities required by state law, State Board of Education rules, or local policy.
2. The applicant provides assurance that the application does not contain any information that would be protected by the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) from general release to the public.
3. The applicant provides assurance to adhere to all Statutory Requirements, TEA Program Requirements, and Performance Measures, as noted in the 2024–2025 Stronger Connections Grant Program Guidelines, and shall provide the Texas Education Agency, upon request, any performance data necessary to assess the success of the grant program.
4. The applicant will formally establish a Student Support Program at three district campuses (one elementary, one intermediate/middle school, one high school) to address school climate and establish a student support team structure aligned to the training and support provided by the Texas Center for Student Supports and the regional ESC. If the applicant has few than three campuses or does not have three of the listed types of campuses, the applicant will establish the Student Support Program and the student support team structure at all campuses, up to three, served in the district.
5. The applicant will allocate 6% of awarded funds for contracted services for technical assistance provided by the regional ESC. Complete the transaction with the regional ESC in a timely manner. Time is of the essence in completing the transaction to ensure that the program is implemented efficiently and effectively to successfully achieve the goals of the program.
6. The applicant will allocate 10% of awarded funds for professional and contracted services with a partner approved by the Texas Center for Student Support and TEA. Complete the transaction with the regional ESC in a timely manner. Time is of the essence in completing the transaction to ensure that the program is implemented efficiently and effectively to successfully achieve the goals of the program.
7. The applicant will use the family engagement playbook developed by the Texas Center for Student Supports to partner and build support with parents and families prior to a student support team assessment, and during the student support implementation process to facilitate a student support partnership with families.
8. The applicant will establish a parent, student, and staff advisory committee to provide input on the establishment of the Student Support Program.
9. The applicant will engage in Student Support Program planning activities from the beginning of the grant program through implementation at the beginning of the 2024-2025 school year.
10. The applicant will establish and implement at the beginning of the 2024-2025 school year, the Student Support Program aligned to the content and training provided by the Texas Center for Student Supports.
11. The applicant will incorporate a case management system into the student support team structure aligned to the training and support provided by the Texas Center for Student Supports.
12. The applicant will align the student support team structure with behavioral threat assessment team operation and outcomes to ensure that students are well supported and that the effectiveness of interventions are monitored.
13. The applicant will implement the data collection and reporting system developed by the Texas Center for Student Supports to gather and analyze data to monitor efficacy of the implementation of the Student Support Program, including student support team structure, quality of support leading to positive outcomes, and data related to increases in desired outcomes (e.g. increase in student support team referrals for nonacademic needs, increase in effective supports received by students, reduction in disciplinary incidents, reduction in bullying and harassment, increase in referrals for mental health services, reduction in removals from class, etc.).
14. The applicant will provide timely response to requests from TEA for information and data regarding program development, implementation, and performance and evaluation measures.

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9. Statutory/ TEA Program Requirements

1. Describe how the LEA will identify the campuses that will participate in the establishment of the Student Support Program described in the program description? Include the criteria or considerations that will influence the determination by the LEA.

We have one school which is a PK through 12th grade campus. Our school and community has a very high percentage of low socioeconomic students many of whom have experienced traumatic events. Recently, within the past 4-5 years too many traumatic events have taken place, as follows:

All experienced COVID - 3 years ago; Teen pregnancies - in last 3 years; Teacher suicide - 4 years ago; Student was molested by another student - 2 years ago; Parent suicide (murdered two students who's siblings attend our school)- this year; Murder of 2 former students (siblings attend our school) - this year; Teacher lost child to COVID - 3 years ago
Staff member lost baby - 1 year ago; Teacher lost infant - 4 years ago; Teacher's son has terminal cancer - this year (son attended our school); Student victim of rape/incest - last year; Teacher's brother (lived in this community) committed suicide - 3 years ago; Former student committed suicide - 5 years ago; Nearly 10% of our students have a parent in prison or has been - currently

The criteria listed above, behavioral and disciplinary incidences, knowledge of student, family, and community needs, and the need to improve academic and all student outcomes is how we determined the high need in our school. For the first time, our school added a part-time counselor by using ESSER grant funds. Our school district is in a small, rural community and many of our students and their families do not have access to, money for, or know how to access assistance or guidance for overall health and wellness, including mental health. Our school needs a full time counselor, behavior interventionists, safety officer, and a program that will focus on incorporating resources and supports in conjunction with the Texas Center for Student Supports and our Region 12 Education Service Center.

2. Describe how the LEA will ensure that campus leaders and staff are committed to the success of the Student Support Program.

By working in conjunction with The Texas Center for Students Supports and our Region 12 Education Service Center, we will have access to coaches, job-embedded professional development and training to implement a Student Support Program that includes improving school climate, a student support team structure, and the implementation of a behavioral threat assessment. We will provide training to establish and improve school culture, building positive relationships with students, staff, and community, which will reduce behavioral and disciplinary incidents, absenteeism, bullying, and improve academic outcomes. We will implement effective mental health training and support for our staff and establish sustainable practices and a plan to continue building on the program beyond the grant funding period.

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9. Statutory/Program Requirements (Cont.)

3. Describe how the LEA will engage parents and families to solicit support for the program.

We will embed The Texas Center for Student Supports practices into our District Improvement Plan which will keep our LEA engaged with parents/families. We will establish a parent, student, and staff advisory committee to provide input on the establishment of the Student Support Program and the behavioral threat assessment team. We will provide and use the family engagement playbook developed by the Texas Center for Student Supports to partner and build support with parents and families prior to a student support team assessment and during the student support implementation process to facilitate a student support partnership with families. Parents will also serve on the District Needs Assessment, and the Student Safety Committee. These committees will represent our families and allow our school to develop a partnership with our families.

4. Describe how the LEA will ensure that there is adequate staff to support the establishment and implementation of the Student Support Program.

By utilizing these grant funds, we will be able to ensure that we have adequate staff to support the establishment and implementation of the Student Support Program. We will use funds to partner with our Region 12 Education Service Center. We will also be able to create a full-time counselor position, a behavior interventionist, a parent liaison, and a health and wellness teacher. These staff positions will allow us to support our students, staff, families, and community to increase positive student outcomes and build stronger, positive relationships.

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9. Statutory/Program Requirements (Cont.)

5. Describe how each of the campuses will be supported by the grant program, if awarded, currently conduct behavioral threat assessments and how the campus will incorporate current systems into the student support team structure.

We recently created our behavioral threat assessment team, the student safety committee, and have begun the process of doing behavioral threat assessments. We review and implement our crisis prevention plans and procedures during our required drills. We review the outcomes of each drill and debrief the situation to make improvement where needed. We meet in PLCs to discuss all student outcomes including behavioral and emotional. We utilize the data to determine the type and level of intervention appropriate for each student or situation. We will continue to utilize these processes because it involves all teachers and staff communicating to impact student outcomes. We will incorporate and utilize the resources, supports, and practices developed by the Texas Center for Student Supports to further develop, enhance, and deepen our existing practices.

6. Describe how the LEA currently identifies student support needs and how it identifies and establishes partnerships with external mental health and behavioral health providers to meet student needs.

Through our PLCs we discuss current student behavioral or emotional needs and decide which supports are needed. Teachers makes a referral to the leadership team if they see or hear of a student experiencing any type of behavioral or emotional need and the leadership team assists in providing the appropriate support or resources. Students and parents may notify a staff member and they will be referred to the leadership team. The leadership team assists in providing the necessary guidance, support, or resources that are needed. Depending on the needs for each incident, the part-time counselor, a teacher or staff member, nurse, ESC 12 counselor department or crisis teams, security officer, special education resources, or law enforcement may be recommended to assist with each incident.

We partner with TCHAT, McLennan County Counselors, and a telehealth provider to provide any needed assistance for our students or staff, as well. We also access our local CPS or MHMR when necessary. We use Securly and Bark for our crisis alert software.

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9. Statutory/Program Requirements (Cont.)

7. Describe how the LEA currently partners with the regional ESC to support improvement in student mental health, behavioral and emotional health, physical health and wellbeing, and improving academic outcomes for students.

We have a strong partnership with the Region 12 Education Service Center in many areas. We partner with them to provide a data fellow to analyze our academic, attendance, and disciplinary data with us; they provide instructional coaching and curriculum (HQIM, RBIS, Strong Foundations Math and Reading, ESF, LASO) support by training and providing professional development and counsel for our teachers and leadership team; the counselor coop. provides guidance, support, and resources for our teachers, students, and leadership team; the nurse coop provides training and support for our nurse.

8. Describe how the LEA will use this grant program to supplement current work to improve services and supports for the mental health, behavioral and emotional health, and physical health and wellness of students.

Since we are a very high need school district, this grant is the only way we will be able to supplement our current work and improve our services to increase positive outcomes. We will be able to continue all of our partnerships with emphasis on expanding our partnership with the Region 12 Education Service Center and creating a partnership with the Texas Center for Student Supports. This grant will also allow us to further deepen our knowledge and utilization of our Behavioral Threat Assessment Team, as well. The grant will allow us to create a full-time counselor position, behavior interventionist, health and wellness coach, and deepen our partnerships with all of our partners. Our existing partnerships with Region 12 will be greatly enhanced by the work associated with this grant. We will be able to implement best practices that align to our existing practices, routines, and procedures. For example, our data fellow will be able to add more information to our existing data dashboard. Aligning the student support team structure with the behavioral threat assessment team operations and outcomes to ensure that students are well supported and that the effectiveness of interventions are monitored, will greatly increase the individualized support we will be able to provide to our students. This is something we have been wanting and needing to do, but need the extra support, resources, and positions to do so. Above all, this grant will directly reinforce the mission and vision of our district which is to ultimately improve student outcomes.

9. Enter the LEA Total Enrollment:

175

10. Enter the Regional Educational Service Center that serves the LEA:

12

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10. Equitable Access and Participation

Check the appropriate box below to indicate whether any barriers exist to equitable access and participation for any groups that receive services funded by this grant.

- The applicant assures that no barriers exist to equitable access and participation for any groups receiving services funded by this grant.
- Barriers exist to equitable access and participation for the following groups receiving services funded by this grant, as described below.

Group		Barrier	
Group		Barrier	
Group		Barrier	
Group		Barrier	

11. PNP Equitable Services

Are any private nonprofit schools located within the applicant's boundaries?

- Yes No

If you answered "No" to the preceding question, stop here. You have completed the section. Proceed to the next page.

Are any private nonprofit schools participating in the grant?

- Yes No

If you answered "No" to the preceding question, stop here. You have completed the section. Proceed to the next page.

Assurances

- The LEA assures that it discussed all consultation requirements as listed in Section 1117(b)(1) and/or Section 8501(c)(1), as applicable, with all eligible private nonprofit schools located within the LEA's boundaries.
- The LEA assures the appropriate Affirmations of Consultation will be provided to TEA's PNP Ombudsman in the manner and time requested.

Equitable Services Calculation

1. LEA's student enrollment	
2. Enrollment of all participating private schools	
3. Total enrollment of LEA and all participating PNPs (line 1 plus line 2)	
4. Total current-year grant allocation	
5. LEA reservation for direct administrative costs, not to exceed the grant's defined limit	
6. Total LEA amount for provision of ESSA PNP equitable services (line 4 minus line 5)	
7. Per-pupil LEA amount for provision of ESSA PNP equitable services (line 6 divided by line 3)	
LEA's total required ESSA PNP equitable services reservation (line 7 times line 2)	

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12. Request for Grant Funds

List all of the allowable grant-related activities for which you are requesting grant funds. Include the amounts budgeted for each activity. Group similar activities and costs together under the appropriate heading. During negotiation, you will be required to budget your planned expenditures on a separate attachment provided by TEA.

Payroll Costs

1.	Payroll (for 2 years)	\$350,000
2.	Substitutes (for 2 years)	\$40,000
3.	employee benefits (for 2 years)	\$50,000
4.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
5.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Professional and Contracted Services

6.	Required 6% of funds for technical assistance provided by the regional ESC	\$51,000
7.	Required 10% of funds to the Texas Center for Student Supports	\$85,000
8.	Cost Share	\$42,500
9.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
10.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Supplies and Materials

11.	Supplies and materials associated with the program	\$81,500
12.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
13.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Other Operating Costs

15.	Professional Development	\$10,000
16.	Conference Attendance	\$10,000
17.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Debt Services

18.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
19.	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Capital Outlay

20.	SEL Health and Wellness Classroom (indoor/outdoor learning space)	\$80,000
	Direct administrative costs:	\$16,000
	Indirect administrative costs:	\$784,000
	TOTAL GRANT AWARD REQUESTED:	\$800,000

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Appendix I: Negotiation and Amendments

Leave this section blank when completing the initial application for funding.

An amendment must be submitted when the program plan or budget is altered for the reasons described in the "When to Amend the Application" document posted on the Administering a Grant page of the TEA website and may be mailed OR faxed (not both). **To fax:** one copy of all sections pertinent to the amendment (including budget attachments), along with a completed and signed page 1, to either (512) 463-9811 or (512) 463-9564. **To mail:** three copies of all sections pertinent to the amendment (including budget attachments), along with a completed and signed page 1, to the address on page 1. More detailed amendment instructions can be found on the last page of the budget template.

You may duplicate this page.

For amendments, choose the section you wish to amend from the drop down menu on the left. In the text box on the right, describe the changes you are making and the reason for them.

Always work with the most recent negotiated or amended application. If you are requesting a revised budget, please include the budget attachments with your amendment.

Section Being Negotiated or Amended	Negotiated Change or Amendment
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
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